

For Immediate Release

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FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS SHARE REMARKABLE COLLEGE JOURNEYS

Ten students chronicle their college experiences and offer advice on preparing for college on new blog.

November 2, 2009—Bethesda, MD—Ten first-year college students who beat the odds to become first in their family to attend college recently teamed up with nonprofit Center for Student Opportunity (CSO) to launch the new Opportunity Scholars blog (www.csopportunityscholars.org). Their mission: to share their remarkable college journeys and offer advice to other underserved students like them on how to make it to college.

Among the 10 bloggers are: [Khadijah Williams](#) (Los Angeles, Ca./Harvard University) who made education her anchor while growing up homeless on Skid Row and persevered to make it to the nation's top university; [Joseph Dingman](#) (Pueblo, Co./Occidental College), the son of a former mill worker father and disabled mother in rural Colorado, who chose a liberal arts education in California to prepare him for a future in politics; [Tereza Ponce de Leon](#) (Saint Paul, Mn./Augsburg College) who refused to let her pregnancy and the subsequent birth of her son in high school hinder her pursuit of being the first among her family to go to college.

“Follow these students closely because they are truly role models from whom we can all learn.” said Matt Rubinoff, Executive Director of Center for Student Opportunity. “We hope that this blog encourages the hundreds of thousands of underserved, low-income students who aspire to make it to college understand that the opportunity for college is within reach.”

The 10 bloggers all receive CSO's Opportunity Scholarship, a \$1,000, four-year, renewable award.

High school students can follow the blog and use the accompanying CSO College Center website (www.csocollegecenter.org) to research and connect with colleges active in the recruitment of first-generation, low-income, and minority students. Students who use the website will have a chance to apply for the Opportunity Scholarship and become future bloggers when they begin college.

For more information on the 10 student bloggers, visit our [online newsroom](#).

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About the Center for Student Opportunity

Center for Student Opportunity (CSO) is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting higher education opportunities for first-generation and other historically underserved college-bound students. CSO programs serve colleges and universities, counselors, and community-based organizations in support of their college access goals. More information about CSO is available at www.CSOportunity.org.

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